2: Jones-Jackson L-5 (1973-1986) 1987
NN23 Sea Islanders NN23
South Carolina

592 593 mealtimes and then returned to her own home. Since her death, his granddaughter has continued the practice.

538 Another elderly friend and informant often sat in the hallway of his shanty, with the front and back doors open to let the breeze flow through the house, and told of Ber Rabbit and times past in vivid detail. Sometimes it seemed that Ber Rabbit was indeed a real character to him, one he had actually encountered and greeted on his many journeys down Sea Island paths.

538 179 The Sea Island children are aware of the "old-time stories" such as those about Ber Rabbit and his many companions, but most under the age of twelve told me stories that they had learned in school, and not those characteristic of the Sea Island tradition. Television and improved educational facilities account in part for this change. However, the skill in telling and the ability to retain the old-time stories appear to be related to the degree of modernization of the island. On the more remote islands, including Wadmalaw and Daufuski, many children are avid and skillful storytellers in the old tradition.

538 851 191 Nonetheless, few Sea Island children between the ages of eight and twelve can match the skill and intricate detail in description that the Igbo, Yoruba, and Ibebio children display in captivating an audience and unraveling a tale. Though color television is a common sight in Nigerian cities like Lagos, Aba, Owerri, Calabar, and Eket, the village children are far less likely to have access to television or radio. As would be expected, these children are far more expert in the art of telling a story than even Nigerian city children, probably because village children are still gathered and told stories frequently as a form of entertainment.

538 517 461 Anytime was a good time for the African children to tell stories. But, as on the Sea Islands, the best stories were told in the late evening around the fire sites when a good group had come together to relax and be entertained after the activities of the day were ended.

The Audience

596 Today, as noted earlier, the extended family is still a practiced tradition on the Sea Islands. The inhabitants, like their West African forebears, seem to be communal people. They live in close proximity

4: Carawan & Carawan B,Z-5 (1959-1988) 1989
NN23 Sea Islanders NN23
South Carolina
Johns Island

Rev. U. L. Brewer

I BEEN SWALLERIN' BITTER PILLS

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I been swallerin' bitter pills and chewin' dry bones. In the old day they just give me cornbread and sweet potatoes, but still I could plow the hell out of their mules.

Mrs. Isabel Simmons

THAT'S THE WAY I COME UP IN THIS WORLD

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I come up in a hard time, and I still having a hard time. I was the oldest one in the house, and I had all the work to do. When I was small they put me to tend corn—ten cents per task. Some day I do five task, some day I do six. Tend 'em. If there's two stalks in a hill you kill one off. In September we go and pick some weeds we call Morning Glory.

Sometime I use to have time to play on Sunday evening, but I couldn't go no place. I couldn't go no further than the house. I get cornstalk and make corncob dolly and play with dirt and spoon. I never went to no dance. My mother didn't allow us to leave the house. When they do have something like the Fourth of July or Labor Days, a big drum come from the city. Play drums and horn.

That's the way I come up in this world.

4: Carawan & Carawan B,Z-5 (1959-1988) 1989
NN23 Sea Islanders NN23
South Carolina
Johns Island

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And it really shouldn't be that hard. The pay here is less, but you don't have to pay rent, and the food is cheaper. They go to New York and then they come back here on their vacation and tell you how silly you are to be here. And what they bring here is a new car, but then you have a car and you have a house, so what is it they're bringing? They're making more but they're spending more. But yet you're here with your kids, and they aren't.

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And really they miss everything about home up there. That's why you find Christmas times or holiday times they don't want to be in New York, they want to be home. They miss the atmosphere, the friendliness of the people. You can go to anybody's house, the people don't have no money in the bank, they don't have no money under their mattress, but they got a whole lot of food. I don't believe there's a house around here where they ain't got a whole lot of food, got a little moonshine to drink on the holidays.

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A lot of my friends say if they could make even thirty dollars a week less than they make in New York they would come back home.

4: Carawan & Carawan B,Z-5 (1959-1988) 1989
MN23 Sea Islanders MN23
South Carolina
Johns Island

593 rearing for longer periods each day. Women on the more
861 distant islands are less likely to be engaged in work out-
184 side the home. They also showed the tendency to be less
[179] tolerant than mothers on the near islands. This relation-
ship adds supports to the rationale that exposure to main-
land social patterns, and the daily duration of inter-
actions with children are key elements in the measured
differences in the discipline habits of women both across
generations and islands. It might also be added that the
work habits of the women on the nearer islands both in
terms of the nature of the labor and its consequence of a
higher income base also contributes to the differences.

592 However this is not the total explanation. It is also
184 important to consider that the more isolated Gullah families
•857 place more emphasis on the assignment to children of chores
861 which were central to the operation of the family unit.
[867] These tasks rather than being assigned to provide the child
with a sense of responsibility are assigned on the assump-
tion that the child already has competent work habits.
Consider for the moment the child whose task is to draw
water, to cut wood and handle the chicken coop. If the
child neglects these chores there would indeed be serious
consequences. For this neglect would noticeably disturb
the operations of the household. These households on the
more distant islands being supplied only with wood burning

592 stoves would come to a halt if wood was not cut in time for
184 meals to be prepared. On the near islands with household
857 supplied with only gas stoves or with both, the child's
861 negligence would not have such dire consequences. In view of this it is easy to see how the chores of children on the far islands would be a more serious matter, and why such households tend to operate on an everytime reaction ratio.
(593) In contrast, parents on the near islands can more afford the gift of tolerance toward neglected chores, and to react to disobedience on a sometime basis.

561 Differences across the generations were much more fre-
593 quent than across island and sex. The element which underly
178 much of the differences was "en ma dae" references of par-
861 ents and elder parents. The way this works is that each
592 parent tries to rear children like they were reared. The demands of the environment in which grandparents were reared differ from the household patterns under which parents were reared. The main differences other than that of exposure were in labor habits. Grandparents were reared in farming households. Consequently as children, the grandparents were up before day-break and actively engaged in burdensome farm labor. In these farming households the tasks and responsibilities of children were even more clearly defined than they are today or in the childhood of the present parent generation. Similarly the consequences